

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 AEC-11 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /132 W

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R 251937Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8615

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 10076

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, UK, FR

SUBJECT: ENOCH POWELL PROPOSES UK-FRENCH DEFENSE LINK

1. SUMMARY. IN ADDRESS APRIL 25 TO ANGLO-AMERICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION IN PARIS, ENOCH POWELL PROPOSED THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL LINK OF MUTUAL DEFENSE BETWEEN FRANCE AND BRITAIN. IN SUBSEQUENT Q & A SESSION, POWELL CLARIFIED THAT HE WAS NOT SUGGESTING THE WITHDRAWAL OF EITHER FRANCE OR UK FROM NATO AND THAT HE DID NOT FORESEE UK-FRANCE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" IN DEFENSE AFFAIRS EXTENDING TO INCLUDE NUCLEAR WEAPONS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN COURSE OF SPEECH GENERALLY AIMED AT CRITICIZING UK RELATIONSHIP WITH EEC, ENOCH POWELL CLOSED WITH FOLLOWING PROPOSAL FOR CLOSER DEFENSE RELATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN: "I ASSERT THAT THE SAFETY AND INDEPENDENT STRENGTH OF FRANCE REMAINS AN ESSENTIAL OF BRITISH SECURITY, AS IT HAS BEEN THESE LAST HUNDRED YEARS, ONLY LESS VITAL THAN OUR OWN ABILITY IN THE LAST RESORT TO KEEP OUR ISLANDS INVIOLEATE FROM AN ENEMY AND OPEN TO THE RESOURCES OF THE OTHER CONTINENTS. IT IS UNCLASSIFIED

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TOTALLY UNNATURAL THAT THERE IS TODAY NO SPECIAL LINK OF

MUTUAL DEFENSE BETWEEN FRANCE AND BRITAIN, BUT RATHER THE NON-LINK OF FRANCE'S PECULIAR RELATIONSHIP TO NATO SINCE 1966. ALL THE OLD JEALOUSIES AND FEARS WHICH KEPT THE FORCES OF FRANCE AND BRITAIN ALOOF IN THE PAST - JEALOUSIES AND FEARS IN AFRICA, IN THE FAR EAST, IN THE MIDDLE EAST, IN THE MEDITERRANEAN - ALL THESE HAVE BEEN LIQUIDATED BY THE IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES OF THE LAST THIRTY YEARS. NOTHING - CERTAINLY NOT NATO, CERTAINLY NOT THE EEC - OUGHT TO STAND IN THE WAY NOW OF A COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSIVE UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN BRITAIN AND FRANCE WHICH WOULD REST SECURELY UPON THE FUNDAMENTAL AND UNALTERABLE NEEDS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.

"SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING WOULD IN NO WAY PREJUDICE THAT ULTIMATE CONDITION OF BRITAIN'S DEFENSE, THE INSULAR AND OCEANIC SAFETY OF THE BRITISH ISLES THEMSELVES. THAT ALSO DEPENDS, IN ANY IMAGINABLE CIRCUMSTANCES, UPON ALLIANCE, AND FORTUNATELY ON AN ALLIANCE, WHETHER OVERT OR NOT, WHICH IS GUARANTEED BY THE ESSENTIAL SELF-INTEREST OF THE NATIONS OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE. NEVERTHELESS, I BELIEVE THAT IN RECENT YEARS THE BRITISH PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TOO READILY TO UNDERESTIMATE THEIR OWN CAPACITY FOR MARITIME DEFENSE AND TO DEVOTE TO IT TOO LOW A PROPORTION, AND TOO SMALL AN ABSOLUTE QUANTITY, OF THEIR NATIONAL RESOURCES."

3. Q & A SESSION FOLLOWING POWELL'S SPEECH FOCUSED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON ITS DEFENSE ASPECTS, WHICH MOST OBSERVERS THOUGHT POWELL HAD INTENDED TO BE MAIN "NEWS" IN HIS SPEECH. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, POWELL SAID:
-- HE WAS NOT SUGGESTING THAT EITHER UK OR FRANCE WITHDRAW FROM NATO.

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-- FORMER PRIME MINISTER HEATH HAD SIMILAR DESIRE TO SEE CLOSE UK-FRENCH DEFENSE COOPERATION, ALTHOUGH HEATH THOUGHT THAT THIS COOPERATION COULD EXTEND TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS, WHILE POWELL WAS CONVINCED THAT "ON THE NUCLEAR PLANE, UK-FRENCH AGREEMENT IS LEAST CONCEIVABLE." POWELL ELABORATED THAT NO ENEMY WOULD BELIEVE A COUNTRY WILL RISK "COMMITTING SUICIDE" FOR ANOTHER NATION. THEREFORE, A COMMON NUCLEAR FORCE WOULD NOT FURNISH THE CREDIBLE NUCLEAR DETERRENT PROVIDED BY NATIONAL NUCLEAR FORCES.

-- ENHANCED FRENCH-BRITISH DEFENSE COOPERATION MAKES MORE SENSE THAN ENHANCED GERMAN-UK DEFENSE COOPERATION BECAUSE (A) THE DEFENSE OF GREAT BRITAIN REQUIRES THE DENIAL OF ADJACENT TERRITORY (FRANCE AND THE LOW COUNTRIES) FROM DOMINATION BY POWERS HOSTILE TO GREAT BRITAIN; (B) AS SECOND MARITIME POWER IN EUROPE, FRANCE IS NATURAL ALLY TO FIRST MARITIME POWER IN EUROPE (UK); (C) FRG IS A CENTRAL EUROPEAN POWER, WITH ITS INTERESTS FOCUSED LARGELY ON CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE. "IT IS DESTINED TO REMAIN THE HEIR OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE." NATURAL GROUPINGS IN EUROPE ARE SUCH, THEREFORE, AS TO COUNSEL CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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UK AND FRANCE AND TO FORBID NATURAL GROUPING OF UK WITH CENTRAL EUROPE (I.E., FRG).

-- HISTORY OF LAST FIFTEEN YEARS HAS DEMONSTRATED THE EROSION OF "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" THAT GREAT BRITAIN FORMERLY SHARED WITH UNITED STATES. WHILE NUCLEAR BALANCE PROVIDED BY US STRATEGIC FORCES CONTRIBUTES TO BRITAIN'S SECURITY, THERE REMAINS NEED FOR ENHANCED MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE FRENCH.

4. FULL TEXT OF POWELL'S REMARKS POUCHED EMBASSY LONDON AND EUR/WE.
IRWIN

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